

Seasonal influenza and pandemic influenza are different.

Seasonal Flu	Pandemic Flu
Outbreaks are predictable	Unpredictable – could start with very little warning
Occurs each year, usually in winter	Only three pandemics occurred in the 20 th century, last time in 1968. We know another pandemic will occur, but we don't know when.
Typically lasts through the winter months, peaking in February	Could last a long time – the 1918 pandemic lasted 18 months
Caused by viruses commonly known to make people sick	Caused by a new virus to which people have no immunity
Annual flu vaccine provides protection	No vaccine is available now. None will be available until many months after the pandemic begins.
Causes 36,000 deaths in the U.S. each year from flu complications	No way to predict how many people could develop complications and die
Doctors and hospitals can usually meet the demand for treatment	Healthcare systems may be overwhelmed
Usually does not impact society as a whole	Could have a major impact on everyday life. Schools and businesses could be closed. Travel could be restricted.
Does not normally affect financial markets	Could have a severe impact on U.S. and world economies. Many people could be out of work. Delivery of goods and services could be interrupted. Supplies of food and gasoline could be limited.
Does not normally impact social activities	People could be asked to avoid contact with others. Places where people gather – including houses of worship – could be closed.

For more information about influenza and influenza pandemics visit:

The NJ Department of Health and Senior Services
www.nj.gov/health/influenza or www.njflupandemic.gov

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
www.cdc.gov/flu or www.pandemicflu.gov